# GLOBALISATION OF BUSINESS EDUCATION—A BRITISH COURSE OR A BRITISH EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE? COMPARISONS FROM A UK UNIVERSITY

Heather Skinner and Haydn Blackey
University of Glamorgan

HEATHER SKINNER is the Leader of Postgraduate Programmes in the Glamorgan Business School. Heather has published widely in her main subject area of place marketing, and has also presented a range of papers on learning, teaching and assessment issues at Education Subject Centre and Higher Education Academy conferences.

HAYDN BLACKEY is Head of the University of Glamorgan's Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching. The Centre works with faculties to enhance and reward evidence-based learning, teaching and assessment practice. Haydn's research output is in the domains of scholarship of learning and teaching, embedding technology in learning and teaching, and social software in learning and teaching.

Correspondence to:
Heather Skinner
University of Glamorgan
Pontypridd
Wales, UK
CF37 1DLu
hskinner@glam.ac.uk

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## Abstract

**GLOBALISATION** of higher education (HE) is becoming increasingly significant with institutions in Europe, America and Australasia looking for new opportunities to engage with students from Asia and Africa, either by delivering in their own countries or by attracting them to study in the institution's home country. Business and Management Studies are in increasing demand in emerging economies, and are often used as a higher education institution's route into engagement in new markets. This paper uses case study methodology to provide four comparative cases; these show how one institution used technology enhanced learning to offer its business curriculum in a variety of contexts to different groups of students. The cases highlight two examples which use a technology enhanced approach, with faculty travelling to the student's home institution to deliver in block-mode supported with online material or with students travelling to the UK for weekend blocks, again supplemented online. The other two case study examples are primarily online. The cases indicate that a technology enhanced approach has been successful in terms of the students' experiences of 'British' education in a non-traditional context. An 'online only' approach has proved less successful in engaging students from different cultural backgrounds in a 'British' educational experience.

**Key words:** Educational globalisation, technology enhanced learning, business and management studies

## Introduction

**THIS** paper compares some of the examples the University of Glamorgan has had not only of teaching business subjects abroad face-to-face to postgraduate students, but also of teaching business within the UK to international postgraduate students.

The paper goes on to compare some of these experiences with an online course designed to be delivered to home undergraduate students and the problems faced by the University when attempting to deliver this course overseas. The aim is to identify some of the challenges posed by increased underpinning of international activity by technology enhanced learning in the globalised market for higher education.

## Globalisation of education — the challenges and responses for HEIs

**HISTORICALLY**, internationalisation of the higher education campus has mainly followed an "import model" (Hawawini, 2005, p772). This involves "bringing the world to the school" by integrating overseas students into faculties previously dominated by home students (Schoell, 1991).

Although growth in international student enrolments is slower in the UK than in its competitor nations (including the USA and Australia), the UK is second only to the USA in

terms of the global export market for education (Binsardi and Ekwulugo, 2003).

Around 1.6 million students worldwide are currently estimated to be studying outside their home countries (Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka, 2006). This may be explained by the intense competition for limited vacancies in the student's home country, as in the case of Hong Kong (Chan, 1999). It may also be due to a belief in the "high expectations about the quality of education provided by host countries such as Britain and America" among certain geo-demographic segments of the international market (Chan, 1999, p295).

A Western education may benefit from high quality brand status (Binsardi and Ekwulugo, 2003). In Hong Kong, for example, "Harvard is persistently ranked first, followed by Cambridge, Oxford, Stanford and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)" (Chan, 1999, p296). These students rank Western universities: "on the basis of research superiority, outstanding faculty, overall institutional excellence and worldwide recognition of degree", compared with their own institutions which tend to be: "ranked merely on the employability of their graduates" (Chan, 1999, p296), and which also recognise qualifications from Western universities (particularly those from Australia, Britain and America) more readily than those from China and Taiwan (Chan, 1999).

The import approach of bringing the world to the school can be contrasted with the "export model" where home students are sent to study overseas, and faculty teach overseas (Hawawini, 2005, p772). However, higher education

| | |
|---|---|
| Advantages to the organisation | Enhanced reputation |
| | Expanded access to institution's offerings |
| | Improved distance support of faculty in course delivery |
| | Sharing of digital course materials and learning objects |
| | More effective program management and monitoring |
| | Reduced operating costs |
| Advantages to the students | Greater time flexibility |
| | Removal of location barriers |
| | Effectiveness of tutoring |
| | Effective development of virtual learning communities |
| | Increased engagement in learning |
| | Increased facility in student assessment and feedback |
| | Greater personalisation of the learning encounter |
| Advantages to the faculty | Greater sharing of faculty workload |
| | Added flexibility in the teaching and learning environment |
| | Opportunities for continuous improvement |
| | Improved teacher-student interaction |
| | Effective teaching delivery |
| | Rigorous quality assurance and enhancement |

*Table 1: Advantages of offering a technology-enhanced approach to learning*

| | |
|---|---|
| **Marketplace challenges** | Increased global competition |
| | Technological change |
| | Increasing emphasis on:<br>• Intellectual capital<br>• Knowledge based economy<br>• Innovation |
| | Increased complexity in the acquisition of student visas. |
| **Students' needs** | Quality of the educational experience |
| | Relevant skills for contemporary business world |
| | Access to 'Western' education |
| **Faculty responses** | Adopting new learning technologies |
| | Strategic approach to internationalisation |
| | Changing models of course delivery |
| | Addressing cultural diversity in:<br>• Faculty<br>• Curricula<br>• Research approaches<br>• Teaching methods |

*Table 2: Globalisation of education — business schools' challenges and responses*

institutions (HEIs) can and do implement both models simultaneously, particularly as the integration of technology enhanced learning has allowed HEIs to not only enhance the learning experience of students on campus, but also to take the school to the world, thus better serving international markets from a distance (Mercado *et al*, 2004; Thomas, 2007a).

Recent advances in learning technologies now facilitate the ability of international students to receive a Western education whilst studying in their home country (Binsardi and Ekwulugo, 2003; Haywood and Hedge, 2002), rather than travelling overseas to receive, for example, a British education alongside a British educational experience.

Thus, adopting advances in education technology and embedding technology enhanced learning is becoming an increasingly important strategy for HEIs operating in a globalised education market. Such markets are dominated by the USA yet also face new competitive challenges from Europe, Asia and Latin America (Thomas, 2007b). Potentially, there may also be an increase in future competition within Europe due to the Bologna Process (Cornuel, 2007; Morgan and Lydon, 2009).

Drawing on the work of Hay *et al* (2004), Tang and Byrne, (2007, p257), and Vaughan (2007, p81), technology enhanced learning can therefore be seen to offer a wide range of advantages to various HE stakeholders both at home and at a distance (Table 1).

The benefits brought about by technology enhanced learning are compelling but when competing in globalised markets HEIs face further challenges of internationalising curricula, faculty, and research approaches (Cornuel, 2007; Thomas, 2007a). In addition, there are challenges of addressing "multi-national and ethnic diversity in teaching methods" (Thomas, 2007a, p10) and the cultural challenges faced by choosing to operate in newly emerging markets (Clarke and Flaherty, 2003).

It has therefore been claimed that a more developed model of internationalisation would be better achieved through a network approach, whereby a global HEI "seeks to create a multiple-site institution with full-fledged campuses located in different regions around the world—ideally one campus in each of the main economic regions of the world (i.e. the Americas, Asia and Europe)" (Hawawini, 2005, p772). However, as Maringe (2008, p1) points out, full integration of the concept of internationalisation into the culture of the HEI is still hampered by both:

> *...conceptual and structural deficiencies in the organisation of institutional internationalisation; over emphasis on human exchange initiatives over cultural integration efforts and increasing undercurrents of feelings among staff and students of local neglect at the expense of global attention.*
>
> **Maringe, 2008, p1**

An understanding of the challenges of educational globalisation is also becoming of increasing importance to business schools which Thomas (2007a, p9) believes are at a "crossroads in their development". As shown in Table 2, they face new challenges in this globalised highly competitive marketplace, fuelled by innovation and new technology and in a business and management environment which is becoming

increasingly reliant on knowledge management and engaging intellectual capital (Byrne *et al*, 2002; Drago and Hay, 2004; Hawawini, 2005; Mihhailova, 2006; Mok, 2003; Thomas, 2007a).

According to Lueddeke (1999, p241), "in most universities…the lecture remains supreme". Despite this, the adoption of technology enhanced learning has gained significant ground. Lincoln (2001) noted the significant strides made between 1998 and 2000 by educators who were adopting electronic learning technologies. Embedding any innovation within HEIs has not historically been easy, and whilst the adoption of technology enhanced learning by HEIs has increased, "the USA is currently more advanced than other countries such as the UK" (Hay *et al*, 2004, p170). The rapid growth in online education offered by HEIs in the United States since the early 1990s is likely to continue for the foreseeable future (Lee and Nguyen, 2007). In 2002, it was estimated that online learning was offered by almost half of all universities and colleges (Hay *et al*, 2004). And by the autumn term of 2004, more than "2.35 million students [were] enrolled in online courses" (Kim and Bonk, 2006, p23). For business schools, the growth in online programmes is particularly evident in graduate education, with most institutions aiming their online courses at mature part-time students. According to Lee and Nguyen, (2007, p31):

> *One-fourth of first- and second-tier institutions offered online business programs with 58% of them granting degrees and/or certificates…40% of the third- and fourth-tier institutions provided e-learning opportunities with about half of them awarding business degrees or certificates.*
>
> **Lee and Nguyen, (2007, p31)**

Not only do the rates of adoption of technology enhanced learning vary in different countries, there are also key differences in the models of higher education adoption. For example, the UK model, which is also found in Australasia, is typified by a:

> *devolved learning and teaching system…In this model, university-wide strategic planning, policy-making and global resource allocation are at the centre, while ultimate responsibility for the quality of learning and teaching rests with the faculties.*
>
> **Ellis *et al*, 2007, p9**

This model, however, does not easily facilitate top-down strategic embedding of technology enhanced learning across the institution (Ellis *et al*, 2007). Yet whilst the UK still lags behind the USA to a certain extent, the adoption of technology enhanced learning looks to be here to stay. It is now informing the long-term strategic thinking and change management of many HEIs and UK funding councils (deFreitas and Oliver, 2005; Kim and Bonk, 2006). However, despite being widespread it has been claimed that: Technology enhanced learning's first generation of e-learning (Adams and Morgan, 2007) was not appropriately analysed or conceptualised (Oliver and Trigwell, 2005); second generation blended learning (Adams and Morgan, 2007) has no single accepted definition (Ellis *et al*., 2007); and changes are happening in practice prior to changes being evidenced in pedagogy (deFreitas and Oliver, 2005).

There has been a recent shift away from the use of the terms 'e-learning' and 'blended learning', towards the more encompassing term 'technology enhanced learning' as a means of cutting through the complex range of terms used in the sector. Despite this advancement, technology enhanced learning in general remains under-theorised with a lack of conceptual resolution and attendant challenges for pedagogic development. Further pedagogic challenges are brought about by adopting technology enhanced learning to serve the learning needs of an increasingly culturally diverse range of students, both on campus and at a distance.

## Practical challenges and responses — implications for pedagogy

**Over** 20 years ago, Ramsden (1985, p65) warned that: "tinkering with what are assumed to be necessary skills without considering the learning context and the meaning of learning to the students is worse than useless". More recently, Bonk (2003, p9) issued a similar warning in relation to online learning:

> *Unfortunately, while the constructivist revolutionaries have ventured onto the battlefield of epistemological change, most have not provided practising educators with the wherewithal to reconstitute and embed constructivist ideas within their personal philosophies and teaching practices.*
>
> **Bonk, 2003, p9**

Therefore, there is still a perceived need for research into how best to manage change in the technology-rich learning environment (Hunt *et al*, 2004). There is also a "pressing need for research that examines teaching and learning in online management education programmes" (Hay *et al*, 2004, p170). However, this concern is tempered somewhat by the study of Young *et al* (2003) which found that the influence of technology on learning outcomes was secondary to other

learning factors. This contradicted the findings of previous studies which had investigated the effect of technology in isolation from other, non-technological factors. For example, outstanding business educators of marketing subjects are deemed by students to be those who display qualities such as empathy, communication, approachability and accessibility (Faranda and Clarke, 2004). These qualities are more difficult to evidence when managing distance learning whilst at the same time maintaining the high levels of student-teacher interaction deemed important in Faranda and Clarke's study. This bears out research that identifies the effectiveness of the technology enhanced learning environment as resting heavily on student-to-student and student-to-instructor interactions along with instructor support and mentoring, factors which accompany "information delivery technology, course content, and course structure" (Peltier *et al*, 2003, p260).

In a study of the traditional and online graduate by Reisetter *et al* (2007), both groups evaluated the quality of their learning experiences equally, yet they appeared to value different aspects of the learning experience. The attractiveness of technology enhanced learning to students appears to be "greater time flexibility and improved learning outcomes" (Vaughan, 2007, p81) and the removal of distance barriers (Hay *et al*, 2004). Some of the challenges faced by HEIs in maintaining a high quality student learning experience from a distance include the need to: "tailor teaching strategies differently for on-campus and off-campus students" (Morrison *et al*, 2003, p208); create innovative approaches to support the learning of off-campus students; and equally serve the needs of diverse groups of international students.

One key feature to be evidenced from Western HEIs that successfully integrate technology into the learning environment is the adoption of a constructivist approach to learning (Kim and Bonk, 2006). This approach delivers learning in a way which focuses on the learners. It moves away from didactic teacher-centred models of learning to student-centred views, away from the conditioning of behaviourism, and beyond the tutor-centred construction associated with cognitivism towards a rich, collaborative learning environment. This may not be so familiar to some groups of international students who may be more familiar with a prescriptive, non-participative approach to teaching and learning (Rees and Porter, 1998). However, as identified earlier in this article, Asia is a key target market for Western HEIs, yet much of Asia adopts traditional hierarchical approaches to learning that are based within a Confucian culture. This approach is typified by a master-disciple relationship where the wise teacher imparts knowledge which the attentive student learns and regurgitates. In this educational culture there is an emphasis on technical expertise and positional power. Social stability of unequal relationships is influential and sub-ordinates would expect to follow superiors' decisions without questioning them.

Not only do cultures differ in their approaches to learning, cultures also vary in their attitudes to presentation formats, imagery, colour and textual presentation (Mercado *et al*, 2004, p187), factors that impact heavily on content development for online courses. Moreover, it must be noted that access to technology enhanced learning is not equitable worldwide as it is only available to those who are online, and usually able to speak English, and therefore on the relatively privileged side of the "digital divide" (Haywood and Hedge, 2002). This somewhat compounds the challenges facing learners already disadvantaged due to cultural factors and variances in learning styles. In this context, according to Mercado *et al* (2004, p184) "A key question becomes, 'To what extent should programmes and materials be customized for different users in light of their cultural specificities and their culturally-embedded learning styles?'".

According to Mercado *et al* (2004), two examples of areas that could be addressed by educators are assessment and feedback. In light of cultural dimensions (Hofstede, 1980) and while recognising that this framework is not without its critics, Mercado *et al* (2004) found that a consideration of individualism/collectivism can inform educators' choices regarding setting individual assignments or assessments based on group work; power distance impacts on students' perceptions of the type of feedback given to them, and its value; and uncertainty avoidance is deemed to impact on students' perceptions of the usability of the online element of learning and "has implications for the scope and framing of facilitative information" (Mercado *et al*, 2004, p188). The key issues surrounding technology enhanced learning for both faculty and student in a globalised context are outlined in Table 3.

## Context of technology enhanced learning and internationalisation at the University

**The University** of Glamorgan is situated near Pontypridd in the South Wales Valleys. Established as the School of Mines in 1913, it achieved University status in 1992 and is the only Welsh University that is completely independent from the University of Wales. In partnership with six local FE colleges, and funded in part by the European Union via its European Social Fund and European Regional Development Fund, the University initiated one of the largest e-learning projects in Europe that ran between 2001 and 2005. Since the end of the project many of the courses have been integrated into

| FACULTY FOCUS | | |
|---|---|---|
| | **Key Issues** | **Challenges** |
| **Effective education** | Personal qualities of effective educators:<br>• Empathy<br>• Communication<br>• Approachability<br>• Accessibility | More difficult to evidence |
| | High levels of student-teacher interaction | Difficult to maintain |
| **Curricula** | Course development:<br>• Information delivery technology<br>• Course structure<br>• Course content | Using new technology<br>On-campus/off-campus<br>Student cultural diversity:<br>• Student learning styles<br>• Reception to format, imagery, colour, textual presentation |
| | Assessment | Individual or groupwork |
| | Feedback | Type<br>Value |
| **Pedagogy** | Dominant pedagogy in home culture | Constructivist pedagogy dominating blended learning contrasting with educational experiences of certain student groups |
| **STUDENT FOCUS** | | |
| | **Key Issues** | **Challenges** |
| **Place of study** | Location (country, University/college) | Evaluating offerings |
| **Flexibility** | Time flexibility | Time management |
| | Removal of barriers to distance | Dealing with isolation |
| **Learning experience** | Quality | Evaluating delivery modes |
| | Access to course materials | Availability and use of new technology |
| **Learning styles** | Individual suitability | Self-awareness |

*Table 3. Addressing student cultural diversity via a technology enhanced learning approach*

the University's Business School programmes as technology enhanced learning becomes integrated into all aspects of the University's operations.

In 2008, more than 2000 students from the EU and overseas" studied at Glamorgan, and "the University also reaches out to students across the globe…in, for example, Bahrain, Germany, Hong Kong and Singapore…under the tutelage of University staff" (Glamorgan Group Annual Report 2008, p14). Around 15% of all Glamorgan students study off-campus. Similar to many HEIs in the UK, and driven in particular by the need to generate income to compensate for the "unprecedented real cuts in their budgets" (Halton, 2009, p1) facing HEIs in Wales, the University of Glamorgan is continuing to expand its international operations and is seeking to increase its numbers of overseas students.

# Methodology

**A CASE STUDY** methodology was deemed suitable for this paper as it allows for in-depth qualitative enquiry into a contemporary phenomenon in a real-life context (Yin, 1994). The interpretation of the cases is based upon the multiple (paired) case approach proposed by Yin, suitable for descriptive case study research, whereby the authors identify not only what happened in each case but also reflect on the specific contexts of the cases. The context of the case is the increased underpinning of a HEI's international and distance learning activity by technology enhanced learning.

Four cases were purposively chosen in order to compare and contrast some of the successful and less successful experiences at the University. Case study data were drawn from a range of sources internal to the University including the University's management information systems; validated programme descriptors; academic staff feedback; and interviews with participants, as well as from delivery partners' information and support systems. Data were sourced contemporaneously during the period 2000-2006. Findings were analysed using a post-hoc reflective account based upon the authors' experiences of the deliveries and the relationships with delivery partners.

Each of the four cases were individually analysed in depth. Similarities and differences between the two pairs of cases as we interpreted them were identified, rather than following the alternative tactic described within the approach adopted whereby the researchers first select categories upon which they then make comparisons between cases. Our choice allowed for analysis beyond our initial impressions, and analysis that drew out some unexpected insights. This was of particular importance given our closeness to the case studies in question.

## Case 1: MSc Marketing, Zambia

This course was delivered by university teaching staff off-campus in Lusaka, Zambia. The course was promoted and administered in collaboration with a private sector partner as a conversion programme for those who already held a relevant level of industry standard qualification (such as those offered by the Chartered Institute of Marketing) which entitled them to use the professional credits towards the academic award. Students were able to gain a major marketing qualification whilst still working, as teaching took place over two residential weekends delivered around six weeks apart. This was supplemented by tutor-supported learning via the virtual learning environment (VLE) and through e-mail. Whilst the majority of students on this course were from Zambia, a significant number were attracted by the ability to study at weekends and flew into the programme from other African nations.

The e-community built within the VLE kept most students on track to complete their studies on time, and students often learned as much from their fellow group members as they did from the tutors. Group emails kept everyone in touch and motivated. Each cohort of students also had its own website where all of these emails could be viewed along with files, resources and links to support their studies. Students as well as tutors could post to the website. Each group's website also had a photo gallery so that students could get acquainted with fellow group members in advance of the start date.

While there are differences between the UK and Zambia based upon Hofstede's cultural dimensions (Hofstede, 1980), it is worth noting that Zambia has a British style school education system, and all the students on this programme would have previously qualified with a UK-based professional body.

## Case 2: MSc Marketing, UK (off-campus)

This course is delivered off-campus at a central location in the UK by University teaching staff, and promoted and administered in collaboration with a private sector partner, the sister company of which administered the African programme. It is a similar conversion programme for those who already hold relevant professional qualifications, and is delivered in weekend, block-teaching mode supported by VLEs.

This course has recruited over 300 students since 2001. The majority of students are from nations within the EU, including the UK, with the remainder living in countries as geographically and culturally diverse as Canada, Denmark, Ghana, Hong Kong, Jamaica, Kenya, Korea, Malaysia, Mauritius, New Zealand, Nigeria, Singapore, Sri Lanka,

Switzerland, Trinidad and Tobago, United Arab Emirates, USA, Vietnam and Zambia.

### Case 3: BA Enterprise delivered online to home students

As one of the first online courses to be offered by the University, the BA Enterprise was designed using constructivist pedagogy. The target market was expected to be part-time students located in and around the areas served by the University and its further education (FE) partner college network. The courses recruited over 2000 students between 2001 and 2005, many of whom were returning to learning for the first time in many years. Only around 8% of the students were from minority ethnic groups. Thus, the majority of students shared more cultural similarity with the institution-responsible for designing and delivering their courses than in any of the other cases.

### Case 4: BA Enterprise, Hong Kong and Malaysia

The University attempted to develop a collaborative project with a private sector partner in Hong Kong which would deliver the online BA Enterprise to students in Hong Kong and Malaysia. Although the University had already gained experience of successfully running this fully online course in the UK, the overseas programme did not recruit any students. In order to explore why and to provide lessons for the future, a qualitative approach was adopted which involved textual analyses of the project plan, business plans and reports of meetings between the two institutions. This was supplemented by an in-depth interview with the project manager. One key finding was that the significance of the learning styles of Hong Kong students was downplayed. Hong Kong, whilst having UK-style education structure, still relies on the Confucian culture which has influenced China for decades. There appeared to be a lack of cultural sensitivity towards content and pedagogy, evidencing a need for course providers to better understand cultural issues and their impact on global technology enhanced learning.

## Findings and discussion

**The University** of Glamorgan is not alone in attempting to take advantage of the opportunities for growth offered by the globalisation of the higher education market (Byrne *et al*, 2002; Cornuel, 2007; Drago and Hay, 2004; Hawawini, 2005; Mihhailova, 2006; Thomas, 2007a; Thomas, 2007b). Like other institutions, it has taken advantage of new educational technologies to serve students at a distance (Byrne *et al*, 2002; Drago and Hay, 2004; Hawawini, 2005; Mihhailova, 2006; OECD, 2004; Thomas, 2007a) through integrating technology enhanced learning into its long-term strategies (deFreitas and Oliver, 2005; Kim and Bonk, 2006).

By adopting a constructivist approach to the design and delivery of courses which include technology enhanced learning (Kim and Bonk, 2006), the University has addressed some of the challenges of managing change in the learning environment (Drago and Hay, 2004; Hunt *et al*, 2004). The University's various online support resources help facilitate this constructivist approach. The VLEs used to support delivery of these programmes also helped foster high quality of both student-teacher and student-student interactions (Faranda and Clarke, 2004; Peltier *et al*, 2003), and evidences the ways that the university tailors its strategies to meet the different needs of on and off-campus students (Morrison *et al*, 2003).

### Comparison of cases 1 and 2

Culturally specific groups studying from a distance in their home countries will not have a British experience even if they undertake a British university course (case 1). When a student had limited options but to travel overseas to gain the experience of an education of another country, or a degree from another country, these subtle differences were not particularly problematic. The wider adoption of 'export models' of internationalisation (Hawawini, 2005) now mean that an international student may gain a foreign degree and never leave home. This then begs the question of what it is we are marketing when we take advantage of educational globalisation.

A British degree is still highly valued in many markets (Binsardi and Ekwulugo, 2003; Chan, 1999). Levels of student enrolments in cases 1 and 2 seem to support this view. The University experienced significant successes with both MSc Marketing courses. There was little difference in the experience for these students, as each were taught off-campus face-to-face by the University's own academic staff, and supported in the same way via the VLE. Although the African students in case 1 may not have had to travel so far to get to the course as many of the international students travelling to the UK in case 2, some were not studying close to home, even if they were studying in their home country, and needed to seek accommodation nearby. In case 2, diverse groups of international students attending the MSc course in the UK have only to attend the course for two weekends.

The course is held off-campus, and is residential, thus limiting wider social interactions with British nationals outside of the course itself. While these students will gain the same British degree as the case 1 students, they are not necessarily having the same British educational experience as full-time students studying at a British campus despite

attending the course in the UK. Not all students of the MSc Marketing course live so far away they must take advantage of the residential aspect of the course. Moreover, once these students finish the taught element of their courses they return home, are geographically distant from other students and teachers, and maintain communication and support electronically. In a similar way to the students in case 1, case 2 students do not interact with students other than within their own cohort, and may never visit the campus unless they come for graduation. Have these students had the British educational experience, or are they simply gaining a British degree?

## Comparison of cases 3 and 4

The University failed to take into account the high value and importance that Hong Kong students place on the 'Britishness' of the degree. Case 4 offered a British degree, and it was marketed as such. The cost economies of studying for a UK degree in Hong Kong are significant over travelling to the UK. Yet it became evident that students who want British degrees also want the associated British experience. The UK students of the BA Enterprise (case 3) gain a British degree, and while these are home students can they equally be said to be getting the benefits of the British educational experience when the course is mainly delivered online, with student-teacher and student-student interactions mainly supported electronically?

The University failed to recruit any students when it attempted to deliver this online course in Hong Kong and Malaysia (case 4). We had recruited a local partner, and designed the course from a constructivist approach, thereby encouraging students to accept and handle responsibility for their own learning, helping overcome the prescriptive and non-participative Confucian approach to learning evident in these countries (Rees and Porter, 1998).

We had also considered technological readiness and cultural attitudes towards e-learning. However, while we believe that we had understood the value our potential students placed on a British degree, we had underestimated the value these students additionally placed on the British educational experience. We believe that this is key to understanding why this attempt failed. For many in Malaysia and Hong Kong the experience of being in Britain was more critical than the 'British' nature of the degree.

# Conclusion

**Whilst** the inequalities evidenced between those on different sides of the digital divide have been considered in the literature (Haywood and Hedge, 2002), the differences between a foreign degree and a degree obtained alongside the foreign educational experience has been somewhat forgotten by those debating the advantages and challenges of educational globalisation and technology enhanced learning.

Despite the data in this paper being (1) mainly qualitative, (2) interpreted from a nominalist perspective, and (3) internal to one specific University, the way in which the University in question approaches teaching business and management to international students does not differ greatly from other HEIs. It also faces similar conceptual and structural issues that, according to Maringe (2008), hamper full integration of the concept of internationalisation into its culture. Moreover, there appears to be continuing resistance to globalising learning in general.

The management of higher education projects is often driven by technological, financial and market drivers rather than teaching and learning drivers. As educators, we should be able to identify the gaps between the managerial and pedagogic approaches to improve future projects, and this could be a fruitful area for further research. Designing global learning opportunities will involve the kind of global-localisation which is at the heart of other industries and service providers.

What can be learned from these cases? Significantly, the difference between students wanting to study a Bachelors degree (case 4) and the post- experience of people studying a Masters degree (case 1 and 2) indicates that achieving a British degree may be more attractive for the post-experience market whereas the British experience is the higher priority for the younger, pre-experience market. This understanding is of particular importance to UK HEIs which are competing to attract larger numbers of overseas students in forthcoming years to address cuts in higher education funding. We therefore suggest that in this environment, scholarship in teaching and learning does not actually inform the planned teaching and learning process, but believe that it should be a focus in the future. It appears that this lack of linkage between the tangible aspects of e-learning and the scholarship of teaching and learning online has led to a significant weakness in the attempt to move towards a global online learning space.

In this global learning space, it becomes important to offer business and management curricula that can meet the needs of multiple segments of learners from different countries at one time. However, we contend that even more emphasis needs to be placed on scholarship into business and management education that is delivered online.

We must prevent simply globalising the production and consumption of information and instead we must assist the

creation of knowledge, by recognising what the scholarship of teaching and learning tells us: how we learn matters to what we learn. Indeed for many students the location and lifestyle issues are significantly more crucial than the 'Britishness' of the programmes offered, yet this is still an under-developed area which could benefit from further research informed by input from the target market — the students themselves.

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